

Appendix L: Management Zone Descriptions

The NCA will be subdivided into three management zones, the Front Country Zone, the Rustic Zone, and the Wilderness Zone. Zones are designations that represent landscapes, visitor use patterns, and management philosophy. Managers use zones to establish criteria to provide guidance on how best to meet management objectives. The establishment of zones considers patterns of visitor use, visitor expectations, and resource characteristics and sensitivity. Within a zone, varying management techniques are prescribed to insure the conservation, protection, and enhancement of resources, as well as traditionally public uses. Zoning as a management tool assists BLM in the plan implementation process by setting a framework within which day to day management decisions are made. Certain actions may be appropriate in one zone, but unacceptable in another zone. Stipulations for the issuance of Special Recreation Permits, or the management of dispersed recreation, could be based upon zone boundaries and management criteria. Zones will benefit resource management by providing guidance for broad geographical areas. This guidance will cover both visitor use and resource protection.

Front Country Zone

The Front Country Zone corresponds to the drivable playa of the Black Rock Desert and portions of the associated dune areas that receive high levels of visitor use. Small areas near Steven's Camp and in the Soldier Meadows area are also be included because of existing high levels of visitor use or the presence of structures. This zone will likely receive most of the visitor use and will represent the area where most large commercial permits will be issued. Likewise, this area represents the zone where other BLM management actions including necessary on-site visitor services will likely be most noticeable. Subject to area and route designations, access to and within the zone will generally not be limited to any type of vehicle.

Visitor Experience

Visitors to the Front Country Zone will almost certainly encounter other visitors throughout the peak season, but will still find solitude during off-season periods. Opportunities to affiliate with other users in primitive campgrounds or undeveloped sites will be available, although subtle, evidence of BLM management will be noticeable. Self-reliance will only be of moderate importance, with relatively low levels of challenge and risk. Visitors to these areas will only need to make a short time commitment with short drive times and no need to stay overnight. Access for people with disabilities will be difficult and challenging.

Resource Condition or Character

The probability of encountering BLM staff in the Front Country Zone will be high. Visitors, sites, vehicle travel, and evidence of BLM activity will be managed to ensure resource protection and public safety. On-site controls such as vehicle barriers, educational outreach, and delineated use areas will be most evident in this zone. This zone will be primarily natural, but sights and sounds of other users and BLM resource management activity could be evident, especially on the playa during high use periods. Where visitor uses impact resources, the response will typically be to confine visitor uses to specific sites within the area, hardening drivable areas and restricting use on restored sites.

Appropriate Activities or Facilities

This zone will be comprised of heavily visited areas, developed areas, and heavily visited attraction sites such as Stevens Camp and the Soldier Meadows Hot Spring Complex. The Front Country zone will be accessible by conventional motorized vehicles including sedans, trailers, RVs and some motor homes. Large group sites could be available throughout this zone. Primitive campgrounds may be used to concentrate uses in appropriate locations and minimize impacts to sensitive resources. Interpretation and educational opportunities will be emphasized in this zone, but on-site developments will be minimized where other outreach techniques prove

effective. Informational signage may be used to explain resource management or points of interest. . Occasional sanitary facilities could be located in the Front Country zone to protect user health and for natural and visual resource protection. Access for people with disabilities will generally be difficult and challenging, but some developed areas will be accessible. Large scale permitted activities will be concentrated in the play areas portions of this zone

The Rustic Zone

The Rustic Zone will include non-wilderness portions of the NCA where low levels of visitor use occur. Visitor use in the Rustic zone will be limited by the quality of roads and will require visitors to be experienced in off road travel. The zone will accommodate low to moderate levels of use, including groups, but visitors could expect to encounter few people, no services, primitive roads and few camping areas. Overnight camping locations near attraction areas could be limited to afford solitude and minimize resource impacts. Resource management projects will be minimally noticeable and designed to blend into the natural character of the area.

Visitor Experience

The Rustic zone designation will provide a sense of immersion in the natural environment, and will be away from cabins, equestrian facilities, and high quality roads. Though visitors to the Rustic Zone will have a high probability of experiencing solitude, closeness to nature, and tranquility, human contact could be expected during peak seasons. Opportunities to experience a high degree of challenge and risk will be available for visitors using motorized or non-motorized equipment. Visitors using this area will need to make a moderate time commitment, which will require longer drive times or overnight stays. Access for people with disabilities will be difficult and challenging. Minimum on-site controls and/or restrictions may be present but will be subtle. The probability of encountering BLM staff or evidence of BLM management will be low.

Resource Condition or Character

There will be a low probability of encountering BLM staff, even during times of peak visitation. BLM resource management activity and visitor services will be essentially unnoticeable. Minimum on site controls to manage OHV and camping uses may be present, but will be subtle. This zone will be predominately natural, and the sights and sounds of other users will be minimal. Where visitor uses impact resources, the response will generally be to close the sites to allow active or passive restoration.

Appropriate Facilities and Activities

The Rustic zone will be comprised of low or moderately visited areas adjacent to heavily visited areas. Most areas along the emigrant trails and some popular hot spring destinations will also be within the Rustic Zone. Some areas in the Rustic Zone will serve as portals to wilderness areas, and the Rustic Zone will include Wilderness access routes and wilderness boundary roads. Travel throughout the Rustic Zone will occur on primitive roads and trails where high-clearance vehicles will be needed, and 4WD will be necessary in some areas. Group sites will be available near attraction areas and at some appropriate locations along the emigrant trails. Where damage is occurring to resources, designated campsites or other means could be used to disperse uses. Rustic and rudimentary facilities will be used primarily for site protection. If fencing were required it will be designed to blend into the natural environment. Interpretation and educational outreach will be emphasized off-site or through other mediums that do not require developed facilities. In cases where other outreach mediums are not effective in preventing resource impacts, small site identification, directional signage, or interpretive signs that are sensitive to zone character may be used. Temporary informational signage could be used to explain projects or new restrictions. Abandoned facilities will only be maintained if they provide interpretive opportunities or if the properties are eligible for the National Register of Historic Places.

Occasional sanitary facilities may be located to protect user health and for the protection of natural and visual resources. Class I and II special recreation permits may occur in the Rustic Zone.

The Wilderness Zone

The Wilderness Zone includes the areas that are Federally designated Wilderness as well as the Lahontan Cutthroat Trout (LCT) Area. The Wilderness Zone will offer the greatest opportunity to experience solitude and self-discovery. Contact with other visitors will be minimal in this zone and any sign of BLM resource management activity will be essentially unnoticeable.

Visitor Experience

Visitors to the Wilderness Zone will have a low probability of encountering other visitors and excellent opportunities to experience solitude, freedom, closeness to nature, and tranquility. To experience much of this zone visitors will have to make a moderate time commitment, which will require long travel times and overnight stays. The environment will offer a high degree of challenge and risk. Access to people with disabilities will be most difficult and very challenging

Resource Condition or Character

The probability of encountering BLM staff or evidence of BLM management will be low. Restrictions and management controls will not be evident after entry. Excellent opportunities for dispersed camping will be available throughout the zone. This zone will remain the most natural of the management zones. Sights and sounds of other users will be minimal and in general will only be expected adjacent to or near wilderness access or boundary routes.

Appropriate Facilities and Activities

This zone is comprised of large, sparsely visited areas, including federally designated Wilderness and un-roaded portions of the Lahontan Cutthroat Trout ISA. Travel through this zone will be by foot and horseback only. No on-site interpretive or educational development will be used. No facilities will be developed or maintained for user comfort. Abandoned facilities will only be maintained if they have been determined eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. Only Class I special recreation permits will occur in the Wilderness Zone.

Management Zone Description Table

Category	Zone		
	Frontcountry	Rustic	Wilderness
Visitor Management			
Camping	<p>Vehicle camping will be limited to designated sites at Stevens Camp, Massacre Ranch, Soldier Meadows, and playa dunes and hummocks.</p> <p>Dispersed Camping allowed one-half mile from a designated site on the playa.</p> <p>Primitive campgrounds may be developed to concentrate use.</p>	<p>Dispersed camping allowed one half mile from designated sites.</p> <p>Vehicle camping will be limited to Designated sites in High Rock Canyon, roaded portions of the LCT area, along Class A and B historic Trails and within playa dunes and hummocks.</p>	<p>Dispersed camping allowed one-half mile from designated sites.</p>
Management Controls	<p>Most evident in this zone.</p> <p>Information facilities more likely at entry points to the NCA and near existing facilities within the Frontcountry Zone.</p>	<p>Present at minimum necessary and subtle.</p> <p>Limited Information Facilities</p>	<p>None evident after entry.</p> <p>No onsite controls or information facilities.</p>
Group Size and Length of Stay Limitations	<p>May be imposed if adverse impacts occur.</p>	<p>May be imposed if adverse impacts occur.</p>	<p>May be imposed if adverse impacts occur.</p>
Campfires	<p>Allowed only in established fire rings and in fire pans on the playa.</p> <p>No collection of green and standing wood</p>	<p>Campfires not restricted, but firepans are encouraged.</p> <p>No collection of green and standing wood.</p>	<p>Campfires not restricted, but firepans are encouraged</p> <p>No collection of green and standing wood.</p>
Facilities			
Buildings, Cabins, Horse corrals, Etc.	<p>Maintained for public use (Includes Steven's Camp, Massacre Ranch, Soldier Meadows)</p>	<p>Maintained only when they provide interpretive opportunities or are</p>	<p>Maintained only when they provide interpretive opportunities or are</p>

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	May develop campsites including: hardened tent pads, fire rings, tables, potable water, etc.	eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. Option to provide minimal facilities such as fire rings or hardened tent pads to define designated camping areas.	eligible for the National Register of Historic Places
Sanitary Facilities	Provide adequate sanitation facilities at selected locations.	Provided only where essential for resource protection.	None allowed
Public Outreach and Interpretation			
Outreach and Interpretation	<p>Concentrate developments at boundaries/portals to the NCA or where existing structures are located.</p> <p>Low profile signs at limited number of trail and other resource sites.</p> <p>Interpretive trails and self guided tours with minimal (small marker) on-site development.</p> <p>Scenic overlook with interpretive materials located near periphery of NCA.</p> <p>On-site interpretive panels, kiosks and public educations programs.</p>	Emphasize off-site methods such as literature and self-guided trails, provide minimal signs/kiosks in areas experiencing Adverse resource impacts.	No on-site methods allowed except when required to protect resources.
Special Use Permits			
Special Recreation Permits	<p>Class I and II permitted throughout the zone.</p> <p>Class I,II, III, and IV</p>	<p>Class I and II permitted Throughout the zone.</p> <p>Class III emigrant trail</p>	<p>Class I events only. (outfitters/guides)</p> <p>No competitive events</p>

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	allowed within the permit area of the playa.	Tours permitted when consistent with the objectives for historic trails.	permitted.
Film Permits	Class I and II activities permitted throughout the zone. Class I,II, III, and IV allowed within the permit area of the playa.	Class I and II activities Permitted throughout the zone.	Class I permits only.
Public Access and Transportation			
Accessibility	All vehicle types	High clearance and some need for Four Wheel Drive	Horse and foot travel only
Road Maintenance	Maintained to provide access to front country sites.	Spot Fixes to retain traditional access.	No road maintenance – Vehicle routes will be restored to natural conditions
Trails	Non-motorized or motorized trails may be constructed, closed, or relocated if human use results in adverse impacts. Non-motorized trails could be developed to separate different user specific times and locations could be designated for certain modes of travel. (ie. horseback vs. hiking) The Desert Trail will be extended through portions of this zone.	Non-motorized trails may be constructed, closed, or relocated if human use results in adverse impacts. Non-motorized trails could be developed to Separate different user types or specific times and locations could be designated for certain modes of travel. (ie. horseback vs. hiking) The Desert Trail will be extended through portions of this zone.	Foot and Horse trails may be constructed, closed, or relocated if human use results in adverse impacts. Non-motorized trails could be developed to separate different user specific times and locations could be designated for certain modes of travel. (ie. horseback vs. hiking) The Desert Trail will be extended through portions of this zone.
Physical Setting	Visible evidence of human uses including buildings and facilities.	Natural appearing Landscape with primitive roads.	Natural landscape with little evidence of human alteration to the landscape.
Remoteness	Likely to experience sights and sounds of	Distant sights and sounds of other	Generally out of sight and sound of other

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	Frontcountry	Rustic	Wilderness
	other visitors.	visitors.	visitors.
Social Setting	Contact with other users will be common	Little contact with other visitors.	Little or no contact with other visitors.